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Letter dated 1 May 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a report of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Portugal in November 2011 (see annex).

The report was prepared under the responsibility of Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral, Permanent Representative, after consultation with the other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) João Maria **Cabral**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 1 May 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Portugal (November 2011)

Introduction

During November, traditionally a busy month, the Security Council dealt with 27 items. The Council held 26 public meetings and 18 consultations of the whole, adopted three resolutions, one statement by the President and nine statements to the press.

While a considerable part of the Council's work in November was conditioned by reporting periods and fixed deadlines to review or extend missions' mandates, the Council was able to devote some of the time available to conflict prevention issues. The high-level briefing on new challenges to security, presided by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Portugal, was one such occasion. The meeting focused on displacements of populations affected by the impact of climate change, organized crime and pandemics as new challenges that may affect international security and on how the Council could be better prepared to deal with these issues and other emerging challenges in a conflict prevention perspective.

In addition, and as in previous months, a "horizon scanning" briefing by the Department of Political Affairs was organized by the Council. These have provided a very useful opportunity to exchange views with the Secretariat, again in the perspective of prevention of conflicts, on different situations and developments with relevance to the Council's agenda. Among other topics, this month the discussion focused on prevention of terrorism and on a possible role of United Nations political missions in the field in this area, a subject we think the Council should continue to reflect further upon.

We held also this month the second open debate of the year on protection of civilians: an opportunity to have an overview of key protection concerns in various contexts and country situations. Many delegations focused also on enhancing accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law. The debate picked up on the discussion in the workshop that Portugal had organized with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs prior to the Council's debate and served also to present new ideas relevant to this area of work put forward by delegations, such as the Brazilian initiative on "responsibility while protecting".

With regard to the Middle East, one of the main issues during the month of November was the application of Palestine for membership in the United Nations. As President of the Security Council, I chaired two private meetings of the Committee on the Admission of New Members. At the first meeting, on 3 November, delegations expressed their views on the application of Palestine, on the basis of which the Chair of the Committee prepared a report that was adopted on 11 November. Owing to differing views and lack of unanimity on the issue, the Committee's report did not include any recommendation on the Palestinian application for membership in the United Nations. The Committee's report was issued and is before the Security Council.

In the Middle East and North Africa region, Libya continued to appear frequently in the Council's agenda. There was a public briefing by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on 2 November on the case resulting from the referral by the Council. On 11 November, the Secretary-General briefed the Council on his joint visit with the President of the General Assembly to the country and on 28 November we held the monthly briefing on Libya with the participation of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, focusing on the work of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya.

The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic was also in the Council's focus. With the participation of the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs on 11 November, Council members held a discussion on the Syrian Arab Republic, including recent developments in the framework of the Arab League concerning the issue.

November brought good news on Yemen. The Council held the first consultations following the adoption of resolution 2014 (2011) and after the signing in Riyadh of the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative by the President of Yemen, and the signing by the parties of the implementation mechanism. This positive development was welcomed by the Council.

The question of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) gained a new impetus in the Council. This long-standing issue, of concern for the Council in view of the grave violations of human rights that this group continues to inflict among populations in the affected countries in Africa, was the object of an open briefing following the Secretary-General's recent report on LRA-affected areas (as well as his first report on the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa). At the end of the briefing the Council adopted a presidential statement, the first on the question of LRA since 2006. To further increase awareness on this issue and in preparation for the open briefing, Portugal had organized earlier in the month an informal meeting of Security Council experts with relevant non-governmental organizations. It was a good opportunity to update delegations in the Council dealing with this issue in preparation for the negotiations on the presidential statement and to explore ways in which the Council can continue to engage actively on a strategy to put an end to the serious violations perpetrated by this armed group.

On other topics on the agenda of the Security Council in November, I would highlight the following:

Two meetings were held on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in view of the election period, with the participation of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, to follow closely the situation on the ground and preparations for the elections, which were held on 28 November. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in conflict was also invited to participate and address the Council, bearing in mind the grave situation of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, especially in the context of the elections. The mandate of the group of experts of the sanctions Committee on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which was renewed for another year together with the sanctions regime, included a strong component on this area.

A regular briefing and consultations were held on Guinea-Bissau and a debate on Timor-Leste; besides the importance attached to these meetings, they were also an opportunity to highlight the involvement of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries in the situation in its member States.

The Council continued to follow closely the situation in the region of the Sudan and South Sudan, including Abyei, South Kordofan and Blue Nile States, and Darfur, and several meetings, including consultations, were organized on this subject.

Also during the month, the Council held, jointly with the General Assembly, eight ballots for the elections of judges of the International Court of Justice, electing four of the five judges to be elected. The fifth judge was eventually elected at the conclusion of the ninth ballot, in December.

As President for the month of November, I had the honour to present, on behalf of the Security Council, its annual report to the General Assembly.

Finally, at the initiative of the Portuguese presidency, the Council organized an open debate on Security Council working methods. The debate followed previous open meetings on the implementation of the note by the President (S/2010/507), focusing on questions of transparency, efficiency and interaction of the Council with the general membership.

The debate was found to be very useful and positive, most delegations recognizing some improvements in the Council's practice, while recognizing also that there is always room for improvement. We were impressed and encouraged by the substantive inputs by delegations from outside the Council and also from inside. We are sure that all these contributions will be important "food for thought" for the future work of the Council — including in the informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

A more comprehensive description of the Council's activities, organized by region, is set out below.

Africa

Libya

On 2 November the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, presented his second regular report as requested by the Council in resolution 1970 (2011) and briefed the Council on the recent mission conducted by his Office to Libya and the contacts with the National Transitional Council, underlining the strong cooperation received from the Libyan authorities.

He referred to the situation of the two indictees, Saif Qadhafi and Abdullah al-Senussi, and the exchange of information on their situation including in response to legal queries the Office had received from them. As to Muammar Qadhafi, the Prosecutor informed the Council that the Registry of the Court was following the formal procedures required to obtain legal certification of his death so that the Court could end the case against him. The Prosecutor called for the cooperation of States to bring the two indictees to justice. He stressed that his Office is continuing further investigation into gender crimes in Libya. He said also that allegations of crimes committed by NATO forces, allegations of crimes committed by forces related to the National Transitional Council and allegations of additional crimes committed by pro-Qadhafi forces would be examined by the Office. Finally, he stressed the complementarity rule under the Rome Statute, which allows the Libyan authorities to submit to the Court an admissibility challenge for the trial of the two remaining

indictees. It would be for the Court to ascertain if the conditions established by the Statute are met for that purpose.

Members of the Council expressed their views regarding the situation in Libya as well as the role of the International Criminal Court in Libya.

On 11 November, the Secretary-General briefed the Council in consultations of the whole on his trip to Libya together with the President of the General Assembly on 2 November. The Secretary-General stated that the purpose of his trip was to congratulate the people of Libya on their liberation, to meet with key members of the National Transitional Council, as well as with civil society, and to assure Libyans of the continued commitment and support of the United Nations. In Libya, the Secretary-General welcomed the transparent manner in which the Prime Minister had been elected and stressed upon his interlocutors the importance of national reconciliation, unity, inclusiveness, dialogue, human rights, the rule of law and transitional justice, as well as the importance of the empowerment of women the revolution in Libya had brought about. The Secretary-General conveyed to the Council his concern about the proliferation of weapons and the risk they posed to Libya and the region. He also transmitted the Libyans' appeals regarding the ready availability of frozen funds and congratulated the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ian Martin, and the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) on their work.

Council members congratulated the Secretary-General on his timely visit to Libya and concurred on the need for the international community and the Security Council to remain committed to supporting the Libyan people in this new chapter of their history. They shared the Secretary-General's views on the situation in Libya, in particular on the key challenges the country faces. Council members also expressed appreciation for UNSMIL and willingness to extend the Mission's mandate for another three months, while underlining the importance of Libyan ownership and leadership, as well as the key role of the United Nations in coordinating international support and assistance to Libya.

On 28 November, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General briefed the Council on developments since the issuance of the first report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 2009 (2011) (S/2011/727). He spoke of the recent formation of an interim government and stressed the overwhelming agreement that the immediate priority was the area of security, underlining its multifaceted challenges, including those related to the shaping of a new army, the integration of regular military and revolutionary brigades, and the presence and proliferation of conventional and non-conventional weapons and related materiel, in particular the large number of man-portable air defence systems and amounts of ammunition still unaccounted for. He also mentioned the efforts under way by the Ministry of Defence, bilateral partners and UNSMIL in response to this concern. Finally, he highlighted Libya's urgent need for liquid funds and emphasized the importance of national reconciliation and the need to address the legacy of human rights violations, as well as current human rights issues, including those pertaining to the situation of thousands of detainees and migrant workers, particularly those from sub-Saharan Africa.

In consultations of the whole, Council members echoed both the Special Representative's assessment and his expressed concerns, in particular the security-related challenges. disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, security sector

reform, demining and proliferation, and meeting financial needs in Libya were priority areas identified as requiring urgent attention.

Guinea-Bissau

On 3 November, the Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), Joseph Mutaboba, and Ambassador Maria Luiza Viotti (Brazil) in her capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission on the situation in the country and the activities of UNIOGBIS. The Minister of the Economy of Guinea-Bissau and the Permanent Representative of Angola, representing the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, also briefed the Council. In general Council members acknowledged some progress made by the Government in the economic area, and emphasized the need for security sector reform. More progress was also needed in the fight against impunity, in combating organized crime and in strengthening civilian oversight of the armed forces. There was a general understanding that results in those areas require the active engagement of the international community, namely through the signing of the tripartite memorandum of understanding between the Government of Guinea-Bissau, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries for security sector reform and the launching of a pension fund. Council members expressed support for renewing the mandate of UNIOGBIS in December for another year and for lengthening the reporting cycle from four to six months.

Liberia

On 6 November, following the withdrawal of the main opposition party's candidate from the run-off elections in Liberia on 8 November and the subsequent rise in political tension, the Council issued a statement to the press (see enclosure) calling on all Liberian stakeholders to exercise maximum restraint and urging all parties to use existing appropriate national mechanisms to resolve any complaints about the elections. The statement also reiterated the Council's support for the contribution of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to advancing the electoral process.

On 17 November the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ellen Margrethe Løj, provided, through video link, an assessment of the situation during the presidential and parliamentary elections in Liberia. Despite the opposition's boycott of the second electoral round, the elections were considered to be free, fair and legitimate. The Special Representative expressed concern regarding violence used by the police against protesters in the days preceding the elections.

In a statement to the press issued on 18 November (see enclosure), Council members were unanimous in commending the people of Liberia on the presidential election and expressing appreciation for the work of the Special Representative and UNMIL. Members also recognized ECOWAS, the African Union and others for having supported the electoral process, and welcomed the decision of the President to establish an Independent Inquiry Commission. The Council encouraged all Liberians to remain committed to the legitimate political process, to exercise maximum restraint, and to work together to promote enduring peace and stability and to engage in a meaningful reconciliation effort.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

At an open briefing on 8 November the Council was informed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Roger Meece, on the situation in the country, on the activities of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and on the process leading to elections scheduled for 28 November. In subsequent closed consultations, the need for a close monitoring of the political and security situation was raised, especially in the wake of recent incidents throughout the country and appeals to violence by opposition members. However it was felt that the current level of tensions and incidents was not higher than in the previous electoral campaign, of 2006, although the security situation in the Kivu regions continued to raise concerns. Regarding the date for the elections, the Special Representative maintained his view that 28 November was a realistic date.

Council members, while supporting the work of MONUSCO, shared concerns with regard to political tensions as the election date was approaching. The Lord's Resistance Army was also mentioned as yet another disturbing aspect, different Council members calling for increased regional military efforts.

The Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Margot Wallström, also briefed the Council in closed consultations, underlining the threat of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the context of the upcoming elections, as sexual violence had been used in other countries with devastating effects in the context of elections and political strife.

After the meeting, the Council issued a statement to the press reiterating the call for credible and peaceful elections and supporting MONUSCO (see enclosure).

On 21 November, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo again updated the Council in closed consultations via videoconference on the preparations for the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections. No immediate plans to postpone the polls were in place since 28 November continued, in his view, to be a realistic date. The distribution of electoral material by the Electoral Commission was ongoing according to plan, with the logistical support of MONUSCO and international partners; the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social in particular and its leader were encouraged to enhance its engagement, namely by signing the electoral code of conduct, and to avoid using unconstructive rhetoric. In the security domain contingency planning was moving quite satisfactorily, with MONUSCO supporting the Congolese national police to address potential threats that could endanger the political process, particularly in view of a possible rise in tensions as the election date approached. Members of the Council reiterated their support to the Electoral Commission and the efforts of MONUSCO.

Also on 21 November, Ambassador Maria Luiza Viotti briefed the Council in her capacity of Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004), namely on the discussions on the final report of the Group of Experts recently presented, focusing on the activities and support networks of armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, the implementation of the Group's diligence guidelines and measures taken to implement the arms embargo. Recommendations contained in the report regarding possible actions to be taken were also discussed. Council members commended the work done by the Committee

under the presidency of Brazil and there was wide support on the usefulness of the activities undertaken by the Group of Experts.

On 29 November the Council adopted resolution 2021 (2011) by consensus renewing the sanctions measures on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the mandate of the Group of Experts until 30 November 2012.

Sudan and South Sudan

On 4 November, following two briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, the Council issued a statement to the press on the situation in Abyei (see enclosure), whereby it deplored the failure of the Sudan Armed Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army to redeploy their forces from the Abyei area, underscored that there were no preconditions for the implementation of the agreements signed by the parties, and reiterated the need for both Governments to extend their full cooperation to the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). The Council members also expressed readiness to consider additional mandated tasks for UNISFA in support of the agreement of 30 July on the Border Monitoring Support Mission. The Council members also affirmed the importance and urgency for parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement to resolve peacefully all outstanding issues under that Agreement.

On 7 November the Council issued a statement to the press (see enclosure), condemning in the strongest terms the attack on a patrol of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) leading to the death of a peacekeeper, expressing the members' condolences to the family of the peacekeeper killed as well as to the Government of Sierra Leone, and calling on the Government of the Sudan to bring the perpetrators to justice.

On 11 November the Council held informal consultations on the situations in the Sudan and South Sudan, with briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), Hilde Johnson (by video link from Juba), on North-South negotiations, discussions with key officials during the Under-Secretary-General's trip to the Sudan and South Sudan, the situation in South Sudan, and the fighting in the border regions. On the previous day, members of the Council had an exchange of views with the Special Envoy, Haile Menkerios, on the same subjects.

It was pointed out that, to date, a number of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement benchmarks and critical post-Comprehensive Peace Agreement arrangements remained unresolved, continuing to be a source of tension between the Sudan and South Sudan. While engagement between the two parties to resolve the pending issues through dialogue still continued, the fighting in border areas, internal strife within some bordering areas of South Sudan, delays in the implementation of the Abyei agreement and on the demilitarization of the common border zone have contributed to exacerbate those tensions. The risks of fighting in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States leading to localized confrontations between the two countries were also underlined.

In informal consultations held after the briefings, the Special Representative further informed the Council on the relocation of United Nations staff from areas where there were bombings, and the Under-Secretary-General added that tensions

along the border may also evolve into violence during the migration period, particularly in the Abyei area. Council members expressed concern over the continued fighting in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States and the impact it had in the relationship between the two countries, as well as on the civilian population, while acknowledging the need for all parties to immediately cease hostilities and for the two Governments to de-escalate the tense situation, settle their disputes peacefully, and continue to build upon the ongoing negotiations under the facilitation of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy and the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi.

On 15 November, the Council heard briefings by the Under-Secretary-General and the Special Representative (by video link from Juba). The representatives of the Sudan and South Sudan participated in the meeting. The Special Representative gave an update on the Mission's deployment and the situation on the ground, presenting the first quarterly report on UNMISS, underlining in particular its successful intervention in the emerging crisis in Jonglei as well as the support by the South Sudanese authorities and civil society to the Mission's actions. Nevertheless, the Special Representative pointed out that the UNMISS status-of-forces agreement was not yet universally respected and that further meetings of the UNMISS-South Sudan Joint Committee were needed. She also covered the political progress made in South Sudan as well as the challenges still facing the new country, including corruption, human rights abuses, intercommunal violence, and rebel groups. Against this background, the Special Representative recommended that the UNMISS troop strength remain at its currently mandated level of 7,000 military personnel, and voiced concern about the escalating rhetoric between the Sudan and South Sudan. She also informed the Council of her meeting with the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir.

The Under-Secretary-General updated the Council on the recent tensions on the border between the Sudan and South Sudan. He reiterated the urgency for both parties to de-escalate tensions, and pointed out that the African Union High-level Implementation Panel had asked for a meeting of the Joint Political Security Mechanism on 18 November. He also urged the Sudan and South Sudan to show flexibility at the post-Comprehensive Peace Agreement talks scheduled for Addis Ababa later that week. Referring to the reports of a new military alliance between Darfur rebel groups and the Sudan People's Liberation Army-North, the Under-Secretary-General called upon all parties to return to the negotiating table.

The representative of South Sudan reported progress on the 100-day political programme announced by President Salva Kiir following independence. The constitutional review process would begin early in 2012. At the security level, the situation in Jonglei and Upper Nile was of concern. He informed the Council that the Government was working with the armed groups to integrate them into the Sudan People's Liberation Army and reiterated his Government's commitment and responsibility in protecting civilians. On the North-South issues, he refuted allegations of Juba supporting rebels north of the border.

The Permanent Representative of the Sudan reiterated his country's commitment to peace and to the peaceful resolution of open issues with South Sudan. He refuted reports that the Sudan was entering South Sudan, recalled his country's right to self-defence and reiterated that South Sudan was supporting rebel movements.

After the briefings, the Council held consultations and members commended the work so far undertaken by UNMISS. Support for maintaining the troop strength at 7,000 was voiced and the need for State capacity-building was highlighted. While acknowledging the progress made at the political level, concern was voiced about the human rights violations, corruption and restrictions of movement faced by the Mission. Members also underlined the need for the transitional political milestones ahead, in particular the drafting of a Constitution, to be broad-based and inclusive.

On the North-South tensions, Council members shared the concern that the recent increase in tensions encompassed a high risk of leading to localized confrontations between the two countries, and agreed on the urgency of the two sides resuming negotiations, under the auspicious of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel. Members also condemned the recent incidents against United Nations peacekeepers in South Sudan and expressed support to the UNMISS peacekeepers.

Lord's Resistance Army/United Nations Office for Central Africa

On 14 November the Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), Abou Moussa, who made two different presentations: one on the recent report of the Secretary-General on LRA-affected areas (S/2011/693); and a second one on the first report of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNOCA (S/2011/704). The Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States intervened in the meeting, in which the representatives of the Central African Republic and South Sudan participated.

On LRA, there was a large consensus between the briefers' presentations and the Member States' subsequent interventions in the sense that (a) LRA remains a threat to civilian populations in areas of affected countries and a source of regional destabilization; (b) efforts by affected Governments to counter LRA were to be acknowledged and should be supported by the international community, the United Nations and the African Union, particularly in order to enhance their effectiveness through strengthening coordination, cooperation and information-sharing between the different actors; (c) the African Union regional initiative on LRA is of crucial relevance and its rapid implementation should be encouraged; (d) a more enhanced, comprehensive and regional approach to the humanitarian situation was needed; and (e) UNOCA was encouraged to work with the United Nations missions and the African Union to develop a regional strategy for international humanitarian, development and peacebuilding assistance in the LRA-affected area.

On UNOCA, the work done so far by that Office was commended and support was expressed to its efforts on concrete issues such as piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, the impact of the recent Libyan conflict in Central and West Africa, illicit trafficking and LRA. On this last issue, there was a general consensus that UNOCA could play a very important role in facilitating cooperation between the various United Nations entities present in the region, the African Union and LRA-affected countries in order to counter the threat from LRA.

At the meeting, a statement by the President was adopted (S/PRST/2011/21), in which the Council strongly condemned LRA for the atrocities committed, the recruitment and use of children and the continued abuses of human rights, including

the displacement of over 440,000 people across the region. It commended the important efforts undertaken by the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Uganda to address this threat, as well as the enhanced engagement of the African Union through its regional cooperation initiative for the elimination of LRA, and urged the prompt appointment of the proposed African Union Special Envoy for the LRA-affected areas. The Council also underlined the primary responsibility of States in the protection of civilians, acknowledged the important role being played by United Nations missions in this regard, and encouraged all United Nations offices and missions in the LRA-affected region to continue to enhance information-sharing. The Council also welcomed the preparation of a regional human rights report on LRA.

Somalia and Eritrea

On 16 November, the Council was briefed in closed consultations by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri of India, is his capacity as Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009), on the work of the Committee and on the implementation of resolution 1844 (2008), covering the past four months. Members welcomed the updates given by the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea and by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on the humanitarian situation in Somalia. Referring to the situation on the ground, some pointed to the recent report of the Monitoring Group and the indication that the increase in humanitarian activity in Somalia is accompanied by reports of diversion and obstruction of humanitarian assistance.

Several Council members drew attention to difficulties faced by the Monitoring Group in its work, calling on Member States to improve cooperation with it. The importance of implementing the Mogadishu road map was recalled. Some members called for sanctions against "internal spoilers" and drew attention to the need to prevent arms supplies from going to Al-Shabaab. Some members stated that the Monitoring Group should work within its mandate and adhere to the principles of impartiality and objectivity. The Kenyan military action in southern Somalia met with support by some members; however, there were reminders that the action had to comply with the mandate of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the confines of the sanctions regime under resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009).

On 30 November, the Council held consultations under the item entitled "Peace and security in Africa" and discussed the draft text of a new resolution on additional sanctions on Eritrea presented by Gabon and Nigeria, and Eritrea's formal request for its President to address the Council. The Council members agreed that Mr. Isaias Afwerki, President of Eritrea, would address the Council. The President of the Security Council, in a letter dated 30 November, conveyed this agreement to the Permanent Representative of Eritrea.

Somalia: piracy

Following the issuance of the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 1950 (2010) (S/2011/662) on the situation with respect to piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia and the provisions of the resolution, which would expire in November, the Council on 22 November adopted resolution 2020 (2011), by which it condemned and deplored all acts of piracy and armed

robbery against vessels in the waters off the coast of Somalia and extended for 12 months its authorizations granted to States and regional organizations cooperating with the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia in the fight against such acts. The Council also reiterated its decision to continue its consideration, as a matter of urgency, of the establishment of specialized anti-piracy courts in Somalia and other States in the region.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 22 November, the Secretary-General addressed a request to the Security Council to authorize an inter-mission cooperation arrangement between the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in view of the upcoming Ivorian legislative elections in Côte d'Ivoire. More concretely, the request comprised the temporary (from 4 to 31 December) redeployment to Côte d'Ivoire of three Mi-24 armed helicopters and the two military utility helicopters, with the required 60 personnel; one infantry company comprising 150 personnel; and three formed police unit platoons with supporting elements comprising 100 personnel. The Council granted its approval of the deployment in a letter from the presidency dated 30 November 2011.

Middle East

Syrian Arab Republic

On 11 November, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Council on the latest developments in the Syrian Arab Republic, where violent clashes continued to occur in demonstrations throughout the country. He also reiterated the Secretary-General's calls for an immediate end to the violence and violations of human rights. Referring to developments in the League of Arab States, the Under-Secretary-General recalled the adoption of the Arab initiative in Doha on 30 October. The Syrian authorities had agreed to the Arab League's plan on 2 November.

Council members expressed their concern about the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and the risk it poses to the country's stability, security, unity and territorial integrity. They also expressed their support for the Arab League efforts. All delegations underlined the need for the Security Council to collectively pronounce itself on the situation in the country. Some of them stressed that the Council should seek to exert its influence through diplomatic means rather than promote regime change. Reconciliation was paramount and all parties should renounce violence and engage in dialogue.

The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic was also addressed in consultations of the whole on the item "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question" on 21 November. The Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert Serry, called for the Arab workplan to be implemented fully and expeditiously, and for all violence to stop for a Syrian-led process of comprehensive political change to take place that would address the democratic aspirations of the Syrian people regardless of their political, religious or ethnic background.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 21 November, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process briefed the Council on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. Concerning the Middle East peace process, he considered that provocations continue to damage confidence and make resuming negotiations very difficult. He stressed the need to find a meaningful diplomatic way forward, including in the framework of the Quartet statement of 23 September. Both parties would have to show flexibility and responsibility. Direct engagement should be facilitated by a conducive environment and therefore the situation must "de-escalate". To that end, Israel should act on its settlement obligations and immediately unfreeze transfers to the Palestinian Authority. It should also be mindful of the continuing appeal of the Palestinian Authority for prisoners to be released, some dating back to before the signing of the Oslo Accords. For its part, the Palestinian Authority should find ways to contribute to the de-escalation of the situation and improve the prevailing divisive climate, including in the international arena. The Special Coordinator also referred to the situation in Gaza and southern Israel, which had once again witnessed dangerous violence after rocket fire by militants and Israeli strikes. He mentioned in this regard that preserving calm in Gaza and southern Israel continues to be crucial for improvements there and for the overall political atmosphere. He said that the United Nations condemned the indiscriminate rocket attacks and called upon Israel to exercise maximum restraint and minimize the risk to civilians, and reiterated the Secretary-General's call for all to fully respect international humanitarian law.

In consultations of the whole, Council members expressed both their support for the efforts of the Quartet and their concern over the lack of progress in negotiations and the troubling developments on the ground, in particular Israel's continued settlement activity and decision to hold payments of tax revenues to the Palestinian Authority. They supported the Special Coordinator's appeal for a de-escalation of the situation and reiterated the need for all parties to abstain from provocative actions and to resume meaningful direct negotiations. Some delegations reaffirmed their support for Palestine's admission to the United Nations, while others recalled the lack of unanimity on the issue and proposed an intermediate step by upgrading the status of Palestine in the General Assembly to that of an observer State. Some members stated that there are no alternatives to direct negotiations between the parties.

Palestinian request for admission to membership in the United Nations

During the month of November, the Committee on the Admission of New Members held two private meetings to discuss the application of Palestine to the United Nations. At the first meeting, on 3 November, delegations expressed their views on the application of Palestine, on the basis of which the Chair of the Committee prepared a report that was adopted by consensus on 11 November (S/2011/705). Owing to differing views and lack of unanimity on the issue, the Committee's report did not include any recommendation on the Palestinian application for membership in the United Nations. The report is before the Security Council.

Yemen

On 28 November, in consultations of the whole, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Yemen, Jamal Benomar, presented the first report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 2014 (2011). The Council also received a briefing from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on the humanitarian situation in Yemen. The Special Adviser informed the Council of developments leading up to the signing in Riyadh on 23 November of the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative by the President, Ali Abdullah Saleh, and of the implementation mechanism by the parties, as well as the major challenges ahead. Council members welcomed that positive development, while agreeing with the assessment that the situation remained fragile and requiring close attention and active monitoring. Members placed the emphasis on the immediate and full implementation of the agreement of 23 November in accordance with the established benchmarks and timetable. Some members also expressed concern about the humanitarian situation in Yemen and emphasized the need for increased and unimpeded humanitarian access.

The Council adopted a statement to the press (see enclosure) commending the efforts of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Special Adviser, welcoming the agreement of 23 November, calling for the serious, transparent and timely implementation of the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative and the implementation mechanism, urging the parties to reject violence, to refrain from any further provocations and to fully implement resolution 2014 (2011). The Council also reiterated that all those responsible for violence, human rights violations and abuses must be held accountable.

Lebanon

On 29 November, the Council held consultations of the whole on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006). The Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Edmond Mulet, briefed the Council on the seventeenth report of the Secretary-General and recent developments in the area of operation of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), including the violation of resolution 1701 (2006) the previous evening when at least two rockets were launched from the area of Rumaysh in Lebanon into northern Israel and the Israel Defense Forces retaliated with artillery fire. Council members commended UNIFIL for its role and work, condemned the attacks against the United Nations peacekeepers in May and June and expressed concern about incidents restricting the freedom of movement of UNIFIL staff within the area of operation, particularly those involving physical assault. Council members recalled that the safety and security of the mission's personnel is integral to the effective execution of its tasks, and that the primary responsibility for ensuring freedom of movement for UNIFIL lies with the Lebanese authorities.

Council members regretted the lack of progress in the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), namely recurring incidents over the Blue Line, such as that of 1 August along the Wazzani River, the continued occupation by the Israel Defense Forces of the northern part of Ghajar village, Israel's almost daily intrusions into Lebanese airspace, the maintenance of substantial military capacity by armed groups outside of the control of the Lebanese State, the impasse in the

framework of the National Dialogue, the continued delay in the adoption of a defence strategy and comprehensive national strategy for border management, the lack of a delineated or demarcated border between the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon and the continued presence of Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fatah al-Intifada military bases along the Syrian-Lebanese border. Members also expressed concern about the impact on Lebanon of developments in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Council members welcomed the continuing close cooperation between UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces, including in matters pertaining to the strategic review, and valued the tripartite mechanism as an instrument for addressing security and military operational issues. Some members also welcomed the renewed commitment by the President of Lebanon, Michel Sleiman, in his address to the General Assembly on 21 September and the Prime Minister, Najib Mikati, in his address to the Security Council on 27 September, to the fulfilment of all their international obligations, including those pertaining to the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and Council resolutions 1701 (2006) and 1559 (2004).

Asia

Myanmar

On 14 November, in closed consultations, the Council was briefed on recent developments in Myanmar by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, Vijay Nambiar, who visited the country from 31 October to 4 November. This was his third visit since the elections of 2010 and his second since the establishment of a new government in Myanmar seven months earlier.

Council members heard about the Special Adviser's discussions with government officials, opposition figures, including Aung San Suu Kyi, representatives of ethnic minority groups, and members of civil society. He conveyed a positive view of the latest steps taken by the Government of Myanmar, such as the release of over 200 political prisoners, amendments to the Political Parties' Law, the adoption of a Labour Law and the professed engagement with ethnic groups in order to achieve a ceasefire. The issue of Myanmar's bid for the chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations was also raised.

The Special Adviser updated Council members on the dialogue between the Government and Aung San Suu Kyi. She had told him that the reforms introduced were consistent with her conversations with President Thein Sein and that the National League for Democracy would assess the possibility of registering as a political party in order to present itself at the by-elections to be held early in 2012. The Special Adviser was confident in a successful by-election process, and said he did not expect Myanmar to ask for international election observers. Nevertheless, domestic and some foreign journalists would have access to a great extent. The participation of the National League for Democracy, and the conduct of peaceful, free and fair elections, would send an important sign. Council members were encouraged by the positive developments mentioned, while some members stated that all political prisoners should be freed and stressed the issue of humanitarian access.

Timor-Leste

On 22 November, the Council held a debate on the situation in Timor-Leste, presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Portugal, Paulo Portas. Also present were the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, Zacarias da Costa, and the Vice-Minister for Political Affairs of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil, Ambassador Vera Machado.

The Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), Ameerah Haq, on the situation in the country for the past nine months. Council members expressed their support for the progress achieved during the reporting period and encouraged the Timorese authorities to step up the rhythm of reforms in the country. They also pledged their political and technical support for the presidential and legislative elections to be held in the first semester of 2012; UNMIT is expected to assist the Timorese authorities in the security and logistical aspects of the election. Council members showed support for the request by the Government of Timor-Leste for a strong international election observer mission, and hoped that the transition from the presence of UNMIT to the post-UNMIT period would continue to be planned jointly by the United Nations mission and the government, in a process which should be cooperative and based on the conditions on the ground.

Europe

Cyprus

The Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus, Alexander Downer, briefed the Council in closed consultations on the morning of 4 November on the latest tripartite meeting between the President, Demetris Christofias, the Turkish Cypriot leader, Derviş Eroğlu, and the Secretary-General (30 and 31 October, in New York).

He referred to the aspects where progress had been made, such as the economy, internal aspects of security and the representation of Cyprus at the European Union; on the other hand, more sensitive issues remained open, such as citizenship, property, security and governance, in particular aspects pertaining to the executive branch of government. He reported that the parties had agreed to maintain a good rhythm of negotiations and to meet again on a tripartite format in January 2012, in New York.

Member States expressed appreciation for the work of the mission of good offices and for the personal commitment of the Special Adviser to this process. Member States welcomed the Secretary-General's engagement on the issue and the efforts of the good offices mission. They also expressed their expectations for the meeting scheduled for January 2012 between the Secretary-General and the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders. The Special Adviser underlined that the process had to be Cyprus owned and led.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 15 November, the Council held an open debate on Bosnia and Herzegovina. It discussed the situation in the country and expressed concern at the political impasse, which had reached its thirteenth month, and its ramifications.

Members of the Council appealed to national political leaders in Bosnia to fulfil their democratic responsibilities and renew their efforts to reach an agreement. Members reiterated their support for the role of operation ALTHEA of the European Union military mission (EUFOR) in keeping a safe and secure environment. Others raised the issue of immunities for members of the Office of the High Representative.

On the following day the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2019 (2011) whereby it renewed, for a further 12 months, the authorization for Member States, acting through or in cooperation with the European Union, to establish a multinational stabilization force (EUFOR ALTHEA) to succeed SFOR. The Council also reiterated its support for the Peace Agreement and the primary responsibility of the Bosnian authorities for the further successful implementation of the Peace Agreement.

Kosovo

The Council met on 29 November for a regularly scheduled open debate on Kosovo, on the basis of the latest report by the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). The recently appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo and Head of UNMIK, Farid Zarif, briefed the Council on the current situation in Kosovo and on the activities of both UNMIK and the European Union Rule of Law Mission. The Foreign Minister of Serbia, Vuk Jeremić, and Mr. Enver Hoxhaj also made statements and expressed their views.

The debate addressed recent events in or pertaining to Kosovo, such as the incidents which resulted in 40 NATO soldiers being wounded on 23 and 28 November, continuing impediments to freedom of movement in Kosovo, and the latest session of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue, held on 21 and 22 November. In this regard, progress was reported in the mutual recognition of university diplomas, while other areas, such as Customs, would require further work.

Other matters

Annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly

The President of the Security Council presented on 8 November the Council's annual report, covering the period from 1 August 2010 to 31 July 2011.

Addressing the General Assembly, the President of the Security Council said that, more than a regular reporting exercise pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations, he saw the meeting as one of the most important in the relationship of both principal organs of the United Nations and as an excellent opportunity to debate and exchange views with the general membership on the report on the work of the Council. He welcomed the decision by the President of the General Assembly to devote the debate, this year, solely to the consideration of the annual report of the Council. He called attention to the monthly assessments by each presidency which

were mentioned in the report, as containing information, on a monthly basis, on the most relevant activities carried out by the Council on each item of its agenda, thus adding to the overall comprehension of the report.

He said that during the period under consideration the Council had adopted nearly 100 decisions, both resolutions and presidential statements, which confirmed the continuing trend, in recent years, of the increasing workload of the Council, which continued to hold a considerable part of its meetings in public (204 out of a total of 231). Open meetings, including open debates, increase transparency in the work of the Council and allow for enhanced participation by the wider membership and the international community. Presidencies of the Council and of the General Assembly continued throughout the year to meet regularly and monthly briefings by the Presidents of the Council to the wider membership on the Council's work continued to be held. Meetings with troop contributors had also been held as a regular practice, in particular prior to any decision with impact on United Nations peacekeeping mandates, as a way to collect relevant inputs. He stressed that these practices represent useful steps to promote a better dialogue with the general membership on the work of the Council and encouraged delegations to make use of such opportunities to increasingly ensure such interaction. The Council continued its implementation of the note by the President on working methods (S/2010/507) and presidencies had promoted useful practices aiming at increasing efficiency and expediency, such as streamlined introductions made by the presidency and videoconferences in open briefings or debates to provide updates from the field.

Consultations of the whole were progressively more interactive and flexible. Interactive dialogues continued also to be held by the Council as a useful consultation practice. The Council continued to devote more time to its work on conflict prevention, keeping on its agenda, on a monthly basis, a briefing by the Department of Political Affairs on issues of emerging concern.

Protection of civilians

On 9 November, the Council held a high-level open debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, presided by the President of the Portuguese Republic. The Secretary-General gave an opening statement which was followed by briefings by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navanethem Pillay; the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Catherine Bragg, on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos; and the Director for International Law and Cooperation of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Philip Spoerri.

The Secretary-General said that civilians are deliberately targeted with increasing frequency and recalled his five core challenges identified in his two last reports. The High Commissioner expressed concerns about a number of situations where human rights violations had continued to occur since the last open debate in May. She informed the Council about the work of her office in supporting commissions of inquiry established by the Human Rights Council in Côte d'Ivoire, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic; about her assessment mission to Yemen; and about the lack of access of her office to other situations. The Assistant Secretary-General highlighted several conflicts marked by the failure of the parties concerned to comply with their legal obligations to protect civilians; she reported on developments in a number of situations and underlined the need to hold accountable

those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law. Mr. Spoerri noted a number of emerging concerns regarding the protection of civilians, such as attacks on health-care facilities and personnel, the vulnerability of migrants in countries affected by armed violence and the devastating humanitarian consequences of the conduct of hostilities in urban settings.

Forty-three Member States intervened in the debate. There were also statements on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the European Union, the Group of Friends on the Protection of Civilians and the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission.

Council members and other Member States drew attention to protection of civilians concerns in a number of geographic contexts and to the lack of compliance with international humanitarian law and human rights law in a number of situations. Several States made reference to the five core challenges identified by the Secretary-General and called for renewed efforts to address them. Many delegations focused also on enhancing accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law and providing justice or redress for victims, themes which were also discussed at the workshop organized by the Portuguese presidency on 1 November with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Some States expressed concern about the use of explosive weapons including cluster munitions in populated areas; others recalled the importance of national responsibility for the protection of civilians; others reiterated the importance of allocating capacity, resources and training to United Nations peacekeeping operations to ensure the successful performance of their protection mandates. One Council member took the opportunity to present the concept of "responsibility while protecting".

Election of five members of the International Court of Justice

On 10 November four judges were elected in a simultaneous ballot in the Security Council and the General Assembly. The electoral process continued on 22 November and, as no majority could be found to fulfil the one vacancy remaining, after eight simultaneous ballots the electoral process was postponed to December.

Briefing by the Department of Political Affairs ("horizon scanning")

On 11 November, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs provided the Council with his monthly briefing regarding issues of interest for the Council, which included an approach on a possible role of Security Council-mandated political and field missions on preventing terrorism and violent extremism. It was pointed out that, in specific situations, naming Somalia, the Sahel and Yemen, there is indeed a need for the United Nations to take a more comprehensive and multidimensional approach in order to address the links between transnational organized crime and terrorism and to assist in addressing the conditions conducive to radicalization. Existing United Nations tools should be maximized and improved methods of cooperation and operational coordination could be analysed. Council members expressed views ranging from a preference for options based in existing tools, on one hand, and an openness to and interest in the exploration of new ways to enhance United Nations effectiveness in dealing with terrorism prevention concerns, on the other hand.

The Under-Secretary-General also addressed the security situation in Somalia and recent developments in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Counter-terrorism

On 14 November, the Council held its six-month briefing by the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies concerned with counter-terrorism. The Permanent Representatives of Germany, India and South Africa, in their capacity as Chairs of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) and the Committees established pursuant to resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004), reaffirmed that terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continue to pose serious threats to international peace and security. They reported on the recent activities and prospects of each Committee and its respective Panel or Group of Experts. A statement was made by the Permanent Representative of South Africa on areas of cooperation and operational coordination among the three Committees.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea/Non-proliferation

In closed consultations on 16 November, Ambassador Moraes Cabral, as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), presented the regular 90-day report on the work of the Committee covering the period from 24 August to 16 November 2011. During the reporting period the Committee held two meetings on 12 September, one formal and one informal. During the formal meeting the Russian Ambassador to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea briefed the Committee on difficulties faced by some diplomatic missions in Pyongyang; at the informal meeting members continued to discuss the final report of the Panel of Experts, which had been submitted to the Council on 12 May 2011, including its recommendations. While some members favoured the immediate publication of the report, others expressed concerns regarding the report.

Maintenance of international peace and security: new challenges to international peace and security and conflict prevention

On 23 November the Council held an open high-level briefing with the participation of the Secretary-General and was briefed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres; the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Yuri Fedotov; and the Director General of the World Health Organization, Margaret Chan. The meeting was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Portugal.

The briefings focused on the three emerging challenges in the context of international peace and security that the presidency identified for this debate — transnational organized crime, climate change and pandemics. In general Council members recognized the need for the Council to be aware and better informed about the ways and means through which some of these challenges may aggravate situations of conflict or undermine peacebuilding efforts.

Most interventions have clearly placed the discussion in the framework of conflict prevention. Some member States favoured the idea of creating an ad hoc working group to ensure a more regular and systematic monitoring of these issues, but this was opposed by other members. The presidency concluded that a follow-up mechanism is an issue that requires further discussion among Council members. The issue of encroachment on the work of other United Nations bodies was also raised

by some delegations, especially in relation to the issues of adverse effects of climate change and pandemics. Some Council members suggested that further dialogue is needed on how the Council can deal with these emerging challenges in full respect for the competences of each organ, in accordance with the Charter.

Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

On 29 November, the presidency delivered a statement on behalf of the Security Council on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

Working methods

On 30 November the Council held an open debate on working methods under the item "Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507), following on previous open debates — the last one having been held in April 2010, under the presidency of Japan. It focused on Council practice and steps taken in implementing measures to enhance transparency, efficiency and interaction of the Council with the general membership. The debate was a good opportunity for delegations to present their views on how to improve the current practice, particularly in those three areas.

Terrorist attacks and attacks against diplomatic premises

The Council issued a statement to the press on 5 November condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks that took place in Nigeria (see enclosure).

On 15 November the Council issued a statement to the press condemning in the strongest terms the attacks against diplomatic premises in the Syrian Arab Republic (see enclosure).

On 29 November the Council issued a statement to the press condemning in the strongest terms the attacks against United Kingdom diplomatic premises in the Islamic Republic of Iran (see enclosure).

Enclosure

Statements to the press issued by the Security Council in November 2011

Statement to the press on Liberian elections (8 November 2011)

The members of the Security Council reiterate their strong support for the constructive role that the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), under the leadership of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Ellen Margrethe Løj, continues to play in accordance with its mandate.

The members of the Security Council reiterate their support for UNMIL's contribution to advancing the Liberian electoral process until its successful completion, and the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union and others to provide observers for the elections.

The members of the Security Council are following closely recent developments related to the second round of the presidential elections in Liberia, scheduled for 8 November, and are deeply concerned over statements urging a boycott of the election. The members of the Security Council express particular concern over threats received by National Elections Commission personnel.

The members of the Security Council call on all Liberian stakeholders to exercise maximum restraint and work together to maintain confidence in the electoral process. The members of the Security Council urge all parties to use existing appropriate national mechanisms to resolve any complaints about the elections.

The members of the Security Council express their full support for the efforts of ECOWAS in promoting dialogue in Liberia, and concur fully with its recent statement urging all Liberian stakeholders not to miss this historic opportunity of consolidating democracy and peace in the country, and to actively participate in the 8 November poll.

Statement to the press on Liberian elections (18 November 2011)

The members of the Security Council commend the people of Liberia on the completion of their presidential election of 8 November, which was free, fair and transparent. They further commend the National Electoral Commission's successful organization of the electoral process, in accordance with Liberian law.

The members of the Security Council reiterate their appreciation for the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ellen Margrethe Løj, and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), in accordance with its mandate, to promote security and to provide logistical support and to help create a free, fair and peaceful environment for the Liberian electoral process. The members of the Security Council express appreciation to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union and others for their provision of election observers. They call upon all parties to comply with the Liberian Constitution and to use legal channels to settle electoral disputes.

The members of the Security Council are concerned by the violent events of 7 November. They welcome the Government of Liberia's establishment of a Special Independent Commission of Inquiry to investigate the events and determine the

facts and circumstances through independent and impartial proceedings that meet international standards, in order to hold accountable those responsible.

The members of the Security Council encourage the Liberian authorities to continue to work with UNMIL towards achieving progress on the transition of security responsibilities from UNMIL to the national authorities.

The members of the Security Council encourage all Liberians to remain committed to the legitimate political process, to exercise maximum restraint and to work together to promote enduring peace and stability.

The members of the Security Council call on all Liberian leaders to promote meaningful reconciliation and inclusive dialogue in order to consolidate peace and advance Liberia's democratic development.

Statement to the press on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (8 November 2011)

The members of the Security Council were briefed by Roger Meece, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Margot Wallström, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The members of the Security Council reiterated their call for credible and peaceful elections, for which the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo bears the primary responsibility. They reiterated their strong concern over reports of election-related violence in the country, and called upon all parties to campaign peacefully.

The members of the Security Council reminded all political leaders that they are responsible for ensuring a peaceful process and called upon all stakeholders to exercise restraint, support the work of the Commission électorale nationale indépendante and resolve their differences peacefully. They further urged all candidates and their supporters to refrain from any provocation or recourse to violence throughout the electoral process.

They further stressed and supported the critical role played by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in providing technical and logistical assistance for the elections and promoting dialogue, as set out by resolution 1991 (2011). They recalled their request to be regularly and timely briefed on the significant events of the electoral process and on MONUSCO's support to the process.

The members of the Security Council expressed their determination to continue to closely follow the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular the security conditions on the ground and the efforts to successfully conclude the electoral process.

The members of the Security Council also reiterated their deep concern about the persistent high levels of violence, especially sexual violence, and human rights violations and abuses against civilians. They reiterated the urgent need for the swift prosecution of all perpetrators of human rights violations and abuses, and urged the Congolese authorities, with the support of MONUSCO, to implement the appropriate responses to address this challenge. They commended MONUSCO for continuing its efforts to implement its protection strategy.

Statement to the press on the situation in Abyei (4 November 2011)

The members of the Security Council were briefed by Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, on the situation in Abyei, including on recommendations for the expansion of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force in Abyei (UNISFA), on 6 and 11 October 2011.

The members of the Security Council welcomed the rapid deployment of UNISFA and the assistance provided by the Government of Ethiopia, which has enabled regular patrols to be carried out since 23 August. They encouraged UNISFA to increase its patrols and air mobility, and requested continued reporting to the Security Council.

The members of the Security Council deplored the failure of the Sudan Armed Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army to redeploy their forces from the Abyei Area in accordance with the 20 June Agreement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area (S/2011/384) and the 8 September decision of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (S/2011/593). The members of the Security Council underscored that there were no preconditions for the implementation of the agreements signed by the parties, including the withdrawal of forces. They underscored that both parties shall implement the above-mentioned agreements in spirit and letter, and called upon both parties to redeploy any remaining forces from the Abyei Area immediately and without precondition.

The members of the Security Council also called upon both parties to finalize the establishment of the Abyei Area Administration and the Abyei Police Service, and to continue regular meetings of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee.

The members of the Security Council reiterated that the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan must extend their full cooperation to UNISFA. They called upon the Government of Sudan to facilitate the deployment of UNISFA by issuing visas to UNISFA personnel and granting flight permissions in a timely fashion, and welcomed the recent issuance of visas for UNISFA support staff.

The members of the Security Council stressed the urgency for both countries to facilitate the safe return of internally displaced persons and provide unfettered humanitarian access to the area. They emphasized the need for a safe and cooperative migration season.

The members of the Security Council expressed readiness to consider additional mandated tasks for UNISFA in support of the 30 July Agreement on the Border Monitoring Support Mission between the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan (S/2011/510), and in this regard reiterated the importance of all parties fulfilling the commitments already undertaken in the above-referenced agreements.

The members of the Security Council affirmed the importance and urgency for the Comprehensive Peace Agreement [CPA] Parties, including during their negotiations under the auspices of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel and its Chair, President Thabo Mbeki, to resolve peacefully all outstanding CPA issues, including the final status of Abyei. In this regard, the members of the Security Council welcomed the 9 October meeting between the Presidents of Sudan and South Sudan as a sign of their intention to develop good-neighbourly relations and to fully implement their agreements on interim arrangements for Abyei. They

urged both Governments to pursue this dialogue, including through regular meetings of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism, which should deliver tangible progress.

Statement to the press following attack on United Nations Darfur mission (7 November 2011)

The members of the Security Council condemned in the strongest terms the attack on a UNAMID [African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur] patrol in Darfur on 6 November, in which one peacekeeper was killed and two were injured.

The members of the Security Council expressed their condolences to the family of the peacekeeper killed in the attack, as well as to the Government of Sierra Leone. They called on the Government of Sudan to bring the perpetrators to justice, and stressed that there must be an end to impunity for those who attack peacekeepers.

The members of the Security Council reiterated their full support for UNAMID and called on all parties in Darfur to cooperate with the mission.

Statement to the press on the situation in Yemen (28 November 2011)

On 28 November, the members of the Security Council heard a briefing on the situation in Yemen from the United Nations Special Adviser, Jamal Benomar, and the Deputy Director for the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Coordination and Response division, Philippe Lazzarini.

The members of the Security Council commended the efforts of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and of the United Nations Special Adviser, Mr. Benomar. They welcomed the agreement by the parties, on the basis of the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, as well as the signing of the initiative by the President of Yemen, and the signing by the parties of the implementation mechanism, thus beginning the period of peaceful transition of power, as called for in Security Council resolution 2014 (2011).

The members of the Security Council agreed that the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative and implementation mechanism must now be implemented in a serious, transparent and timely manner, and in a spirit of inclusion and reconciliation. They noted the Security Council's support for Yemen in its efforts to reach key milestones in the implementation plan, and expected the parties to honour the timetable set out in the agreement, including the formation of a Government of National Consensus, presidential elections within 90 days, a national dialogue, a constitutional review and a programme of reforms that start to tackle the profound humanitarian, economic and security challenges that Yemen faces.

The members of the Security Council reaffirmed their commitment to the territorial integrity and unity of Yemen. They urged all the parties to reject violence, refrain from any further provocations and to fully implement Security Council resolution 2014 (2011). The members of the Security Council reiterated that all those responsible for violence, human rights violations and abuses should be held accountable. They deplored the violence on 24 November that reportedly led to five deaths in Sana'a. The members of the Security Council emphasized the need for increased and unimpeded humanitarian access to address the growing crisis. The

members of the Security Council also called on all the Yemeni parties to work with the increasing support of the United Nations, international community and the GCC countries, immediately towards achieving peace, stability and reconciliation, as well as alleviating the humanitarian and economic situation in Yemen.

The members of the Security Council welcomed the efforts of the good offices of the Secretary-General and the dispatch of the United Nations electoral assistance mission. They reaffirmed their intention to continue to actively monitor the security, political and humanitarian situation in Yemen and the implementation of Security Council resolution 2014 (2011). They looked forward to a further update on the situation within 30 days, including on the status of the implementation of the political transition agreements.

Statement to the press on Nigeria (8 November 2011)

The members of the Security Council condemned in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks that occurred in Damaturu and Potiskum, Nigeria, on 4 November 2011, causing numerous deaths and injuries.

The members of the Security Council expressed their deep sympathy and condolences to the victims of these heinous crimes and their families, and to the people and Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The members of the Security Council reaffirmed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations is criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of its motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed, and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

The members of the Security Council reaffirmed the need to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.

The members of the Security Council reminded States that they must ensure that measures taken to combat terrorism comply with all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law.

The members of the Security Council underlined the need to bring perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of these reprehensible acts of terrorism to justice, and urged all States, in accordance with their obligations under international law and relevant Security Council resolutions, to cooperate actively with the Nigerian authorities in this regard.

The members of the Security Council reiterated their determination to combat all forms of terrorism, in accordance with its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations.

Statement to the press on attacks against diplomatic premises in Syria (15 November 2011)

The members of the Security Council condemned in the strongest terms the attacks against several embassies and consular premises in Syria, which have resulted in intrusions into diplomatic and consular premises, causing serious damage.

The members of the Security Council recalled the fundamental principle of the inviolability of diplomatic and consular premises and the obligations on host Governments, including under the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and under the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, to take all appropriate steps to protect diplomatic and consular premises against any intrusion or damage, and prevent any disturbance of the peace of these missions or impairment of their dignity.

In this context, recalling the press statement of 12 July 2011 (Press Release SC/10321) and expressing their deep concern at the repetition of such attacks, the members of the Security Council reiterated their call on the Syrian authorities to protect diplomatic and consular property and personnel, and fully respect their international obligations in this regard.

Statement to the press on attacks against United Kingdom diplomatic premises in Iran (29 November 2011)

The members of the Security Council condemned in the strongest terms the attacks against the United Kingdom's embassy in Tehran, Iran, which resulted in intrusions into the diplomatic and consular premises, causing serious damage.

The members of the Security Council recalled the fundamental principle of the inviolability of diplomatic and consular premises, and the obligations on host Governments, including under the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, to take all appropriate steps to protect diplomatic and consular premises against any intrusion or damage, and to prevent any disturbance of the peace of these missions or impairment of their dignity.

In this context, and expressing their deep concern at such attacks, the members of the Security Council called on the Iranian authorities to protect diplomatic and consular property and personnel, and to respect fully their international obligations in this regard.